

amendment that would address that. But I think at this time, if we were to take the maximum cost of the fund, say that there would be 100 individuals out there who would have access to another \$10,000 under this kind of a provision, we know then what that amount would be. If it were 25, we know what that amount would be. If it were 1,000, we know what that amount would be. What we cannot calculate, my dear colleagues, is this, what would be the exposure to the fund above the 25,000? We do not know, it may be millions, it may be millions, tens of millions, more than that even. And that is a concern of all of us, because that is where the real cost of this proposal will lie. I hope that you will recognize that, in this instance, that, in this instance, I think we are doing a serious disservice if we remain with the \$15,000 figure. And we say, well, this is a worst case scenario, this individual will just have to survive the best way she can, hopefully, she can continue to work in the nursing home, and I would imagine, I don't know how many hours a week a 77-year-old lady can work in the nursing home, and how much money she can earn, and I'm sure she's not concerned about it either, she's pleased that she can work. But the facts are that today it is Mrs. Jeanneret in Senator Morrissey's district. Tomorrow it will be someone in my district, or your district, and the day after that, and the week after that, and the month after that it will be another inequity. To the extent that this Legislature is able to do so, we ought to try to relieve those inequities. I know that it is not easy. I know that we cannot do everything for everyone. But I think, in this instance, we are acting on behalf of the individuals at the lower end of the income scale, I think that's important. It has been my experience in the 62 years I've been alive, and the 23 years I've been in this Legislature, and the 35 or 40 years I've been in public life that the more affluent you are, the more resources you have, the more able you are to sell your idea to the public. It is those individuals with limited resources, limited contacts with the Legislature, limited contacts with someone who will lobby for them that really are, at the most time, at the mercy of this body. Once in a while on this floor we do try to do things for those people, in fact many times; I am reluctant to say this, but I believe probably less today than when I first came here more than 20 years ago. I want to say this, if, in fact, if, in fact, this amendment pertained to the entity that earns millions of dollars per year, I can assure you, I can assure you they would have a lobbyist in here. They would have phone calls coming in, you would hear from many, many quarters. This lady